The Washington Times
Published Evening and Sunday.
TENTH AND D STREETS NORTHWEST.

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Daily, one year.....$3.00
Sunday, one year.....$2.50

The Times is served in the city of Washington and District of Columbia by newsboys, who deliver and collect for the paper on their own account at the rate of 6 cents a week for the Evening and 5 cents a copy for the Sunday edition.

People leaving the city for the summer for an extended or short period can have The Times mailed to their address, and the address changed as often as desired, at the regular subscription price. All mail subscriptions are invariably payable in advance.

SUNDAY, MAY 21, 1905.

The Shad Bake.

If the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, the way to the heart of a civic body is through a banquet. Formal meetings are useful and necessary, but men never grow to know each other until they meet in relaxation and play. Unless they know each other much time and labor is lost at unnecessary cross-purposes and avoidable misunderstandings.

Washington is a city noted for its public shad bakes. The fire underwriters have one a year, so does the bar, and so does the Board of Trade. At these gatherings there is a joyous freedom that is a relief to the busy men who participate, and that brings the active men of the city closer together in sympathy and understanding. As a result the public spirit of Washington is as strong, and is on as high a plane, as that of any city in the world.

Yesterday the Board of Trade held its annual outing at River View. The spirit of the occasion was dignified, but free and delightful. Perhaps the most noteworthy matter was the intense earnestness of all the distinguished speakers in responding to the toasts assigned them. Their messages rang clear and true, for they were the utterances of men who have a purpose in life and a definite work to do.

That purpose was the unification and direction of our public spirit toward the beautification of the National Capital. The people of the District will heartily indorse whatever tends in this direction, and they will be backed up by the whole body of American citizens, for the embellishment of the Nation's City is the adornment of the Nation itself.

Midnight Warblers.

There is a species of bird common in the District of Columbia that is seldom seen, though its song is often heard. Its habit is to remain quietly in hiding during the daytime, and until shortly before midnight, when it flutters erratically from the corner of one street to another singing popular airs in a shrill and discordant, or else bass and muffled, tone.

This bird is of a sociable nature and usually goes in small flocks, but occasionally it may be found in couples, or a solitary specimen may take possession of the night. It has a fondness for bright lights, which, perhaps, accounts for its flitting from one barroom to another; but it has one habit which approaches divination and second-sight so closely that scientists are puzzled to explain it. How does this bird know, by what instinct is it led, what malevolent devil possesses it invariably to detect in which houses there are teething infants, tired men, and nervous women, and unfailingly to pause in front of such domiciles and pour out its song? Evidently the bird is of ill omen and its advent portends loss of sleep. It is called the midnight warbler from the tremolo that distinguishes its song. Our scientists, the police, would do well to investigate its curious habits and help it to its nest.

The Nation at Play.

If you want to find the good American these days look for him in one of two places—either at his workshop or in the field. All over the country his day is divided between his work and his play out-of-doors. It is the crack of the bat, the click of the golf ball, the quick step of the tennis court, the report of the starter's pistol, or the even beat of the oar in its lock, which holds his interest these days. And it is good for the nation.

Every section reports athletic enthusiasm. Hardly a paper comes to our exchange table which has not doubled the space given to sports, and the increase is due nearly always to activity among amateurs. Yet one of the New York dailies which did not find enough interest in baseball two years ago to warrant the allotment of any space to professional games now gives them three columns or more.

The Baltimore and Ohio railroad has bought a handsome clubhouse that its employes within reach may not lack for athletic equipment. Branches of the Y. M. C. A. from Rockland to Albuquerque are straining their finances to accommodate the thousands of young men who want to play. The golf clubs are crowded. The entries for the tournaments, or field and track meets, or series of games, scheduled this summer are so large that they are everywhere embarrassing the officials. And of hardly any less interest is the fact that the American woman is taking her place abreast of her brother, with racquet, or golf club, or canoe paddle, or even baseball mitt in hand ready for use.

Washington leads, as it ought to lead, in this movement toward the stronger man. It maintains with steady patronage in baseball alone ten leagues of about six teams each, two of them recruited from Sunday schools; two college teams which rank with the best college nines; half a dozen independent clubs; an abundant number of "scrubs," and a professional team as constantly "on the jump" as a Mexican bean. Furthermore the Capital has a fine league of basketball clubs, half a dozen associations of bowling clubs, two fine boat clubs, in addition to crews maintained by the local colleges; a score of tennis clubs, an association of roque clubs, and general athletic associations in the National Guard, the military and marine stations, the public schools, the departments, and every other field of local labor.

What will be the effect of all this? To fit a sound body on every sound brain, to loosen the girth and increase the endurance, to clear the eye and establish all the workings of the brain on the normal, resourceful basis of good health. In a word, it will conduce to good citizenship; and in that sense it is pleasant to think that the President is himself a leader in all manly sports and has doubtless given force to this wave.

The whole country seems to be wakening. We are purging our politics, cleaning out our businesses, turning resolutely back to honesty as a requisite in all our dealings, and looking away from the confinement of a house in a row to a dwelling where God's air and sunlight can get in on all sides. This rebound to the joy of a resourceful physique is corollary to these other currents toward a better national life. America can afford to be complacent as long as its men and women are as happy in open-air sport as they are today.

Reform and Reformers.

There is a movement for righteousness throughout the world. As yet it is but as the rustling of the trees that accompanies the break of day; it is a rising of the wind that promises much for the future.

Many men are honestly urging this movement forward, but there are charlatans here and there, who, having caught the direction of the breeze, are using it to grind their own grist. Concerning these the current issue of The World Today says:

"Just now the charlatan reformer is too considerably in evidence. We are in an era of confession. Boodlers confess to escape punishment. Good men to ease their conscience. Gentlemen with active imaginations confess in the interest of their income. It is the charlatan's golden age. A man's penitence has come to be his largest financial asset. There never was a time when reputations were so butchered to make newspaper and magazine circulation. * * *

"To uncover the sins of one's associates and one's self as a commercial venture and to advertise specifics or cure-alls is a genuine menace to public morals. It is one thing for the department of health to open up a city's sewers. It would be quite another thing if sewer opening became a commercially lucrative fad. A man is not a prophet because he lays bare social evils. He may be a common yellow journalist. It is one thing to bare evils in the name of God; it is quite another thing to be a scandalmonger at so much a thousand words."

Mr. Lincoln's epigram gives much encouragement to all optimists: "You can fool some of the people all the time; you can fool all of them some time; but you can't fool all the people all the time." When notoriety hunters and charlatan reformers seem most to sway the public, it is then the hour draws near for the swift and certain condemnation to which they are entitled. Let us not fret our hearts about the pinckbeck and copper-washed reformers; there are true and honest men at work in the world, men full of patriotism and wisdom, and in the end the works of the latter will endure and the works of the others will be swept away and forgotten.

The Indeterminate Sentence.

The magazines have much to say these days of discrepancies in sentences imposed for crime. Thus, larceny, which usually moves the courts of the District of Columbia to imprison the offender for fifteen days or three months, in Louisiana justifies a sentence of two years, and in Connecticut a sentence of twenty years. The severest penalty for forgery in Delaware is three years' imprisonment; in New York it is a sentence for life. The average sentence for arson in Arkansas is two years; in Rhode Island it is seventeen years and a half. This is all retributive justice—but it is retribution according to geography and not according to the character of the offender.

Accordingly, Eugene Smith—a lawyer who has given a whole lifetime of attention to the study of prison reform—is out in the Independent with an argument in favor of the indeterminate sentence for crime. "By this sentence," says Mr. Smith, "a person convicted of crime is sentenced to imprisonment—not for any fixed or definite term—but to imprisonment simply. The imprisonment is to continue until the prisoner shall have undergone such a change in his character, habits, and purposes as to render it safe, in the judgment of a competent tribunal, to restore him to freedom."

It is manifest that our present system of punishing criminals begins wrong. The conditions which produce crime and the nature of the offense are approximately the same all over the country. At any rate, there is no difference which warrants this extraordinary discrepancy in punishment. And most of the penal institutions are not reformatory in their influence; they are punitive merely, and send the criminal into the world the worse in character and the more bankrupt in opportunity. To remedy the first failing the National Bar Association ought to prove equal. The second is more serious, depending as it does on the character of the prison warden.

As long as the indeterminate sentence depends upon the judgment of such men as now govern our "reformatories" it will appeal to the average citizen as, perhaps, a desirable scheme of punishment, but at present decidedly impracticable. We will begin our reform first with the reformatories.

The Mocking-Bird

Near The Times office is a caged mocking-bird. He sings as gladly as though he were free; he has the pardonable pride that goes with superior ability and acknowledged excellence; his soul is full of music, and he pleases himself and his neighbors by pouring it forth from morning to night. His song is the springtime call of nature and freedom and love; it is the one touch of beauty in a street otherwise dingy and narrow.

Sometimes, at the close of the day, when the air is heavy with the smell of ink; when the distant rumble of the press drones in the ears like the hum of innumerable bees; when the pen sputters and the pencil grows dull; sometimes, when the work of the day gives way to the more soothing process of digestion and the eyes droop and skip a line here and three lines there; sometimes that bird puts extra sweetness into his notes and has a languorous liquidness in his call that causes day dreams and the surge of ancient and neglected memories. It is then that the mind goes back to the moonlit splendors of the Southland.

Once, as this magician sang his incantation, a little boy in a lonely garret lay awake and listened to the melody without, which seemed to flood the night equally with the moon; there could be no ogres or giants where such delicious music pleased the ear, and the little boy fell asleep to dream of lovely princesses, his fairy godmother, and himself as the lucky prince. At another time the bird-notes, with their full, low tremolo, set the heart-strings in sympathetic vibration; then a youth and a maiden paced the path before her father's house while the scent of the honeysuckle, the jasmine, and the spicy rose filled the air with a sweetness that vied with the melody which the mocking-bird in the oak tree near the road was pouring forth. And, again, the deep bell-tones of the caged bird recalled that night in June when the family sat solemnly on the moonlit lawn, one of its members having been laid to rest beneath the myrtle and the yew trees in the private cemetery beyond the hill. There was little to be said; but the glorious melodies of the mocking-bird filled the silence with beauty and led thought to rise above the grave and soar starward.

Sunday Among the Trees.

Washington cuddles up, through the winter, in a cozy nest of hills. All about her—north, east, south, and west—sturdy pines shield her from the chill winds; and the beautiful city in the shelter spins and weaves so industriously that she forgets, now and then, to look out and nod her thanks in return.

But when summer comes with new needles for the pines and crisp, cool leaves for the oaks and maples, the city looks up and sees the hills. And those of her children who are able to go out among the trees and put on airs. The rest of the family must stay at home, working, sweltering, and casting their eyes toward the hazy trees in the distance with a longing that just misses being envy. At this season those who "summer" in the country come into town every little while and talk about being "roasted alive" and "rushing back to the cool," and being here "just for some business at the bank," and so on, as though they had no knowledge at all of their brothers and sisters who would like to live beyond the hills, but cannot.

For these others the holiday comes once a week, not three months in the year. They must rest, as they live, a day at a time. So on Sundays they dress up—mother in a fresh muslin; father in a black cut-away, edged with braid; John, who clerks in a store, in a blue serge with a yachting cap; big sister in a lawn dress with more open work than lawn, and a white hat that shoots off toward heaven; two little girls in Russian blouses and socks, and the baby in the pink and white knitted sack that was waiting for her when they expected to get a little boy, but didn't. John carries a market basket and his father a hammock, folded up square.

So they climb into the car and crowd you away from the end; and you wonder why they had to get into your seat. But the family don't know you are alive and don't care. They are off to the woods, and whether they go all the way in a trolley car, or on the steam cars, or by steamboat, they are thoroughly happy. The air that you breathe indifferently, out among the trees, fills them with a new energy and gives their step a spring which is a fine contrast with their next day's trudge about their work. The creek you pass without hearing its murmur or noting its glistening ripples is a wonderful thing to them: the little girls wade in it, and John fishes in it, and the father and mother walk along its bank as light-hearted as though there were no grind on the morrow to shut them in again.

Then the market basket! Maybe you think you don't like cold string beans, and potted meats, and thin lemonade, and tomatoes with salt on them. That is not the trouble. The trouble is that you have no appetite. If you had the appetite that hard work and the country air gives these Sunday excursionists their market basket dinner would taste better to you than all the grass sandwiches or pate de foie gras that ever were made. And when the evening comes, and the baby cries, and everybody is tired out, they come back to the city to sleep as they have not slept since their last sortie beyond the hills.

We have assumed that you belong with those who live in the country in the summer. If you do, take a long look at the next party like this you encounter and make way for them in the consciousness that they can teach you much that you ought to know. But if you do not, if you are one of these excursionists yourself, we say the cars are yours on Sunday and there is not an open-minded, Christ-like preacher in Washington who would keep you inside the hills on the day He appointed that all His children might rest.

The Virginia political campaign has reached the mint julep and "I bet you, suh," stage.

Fashion notes say the women's hosiery must suit their walking skirts—and the peek-a-boo man will be in style.

When Uncle Sam goes to the open market on the Congressional Limited plan the free traders will work overtime at the pie counter.

J. Pierpont Morgan's offer to manage the Pope's finances suggests a desire on Pierpont's part to get another look at the Ascoli cope deal.

The New York police court lawyers accused of accepting graft merely want to trot in the Legislature class.

Holland's $280,000 appropriation for the Peace Palace wouldn't pay the beer tax of Peace King Bartholdt's Congressional district.

Lieutenant General Sahkaroff, who married a Sister of Mercy before returning to St. Petersburg, evidently preferred to take his with him.

The people in South Washington refuse to let the railroad run over them.

Congressman Burton thinks he has said enough. It's a good example.

The machinery carried by the Baltic fleet for scraping away seaweed may be used to mow the lawn when the Russians open their mermaids' summer resort.

Kentucky's Legislature has made it a felony to steal chickens, and now it is called "lifting the lid to the feather scandal."

The news that the American yacht is leading in the ocean race proves that the Beef trust has hired out one of its experienced fugitives.

France fears Japan will take Indo-China, and as we can't pronounce the alarmist's name, "we'll call him Hull.

Not every man with "Private" marked on his door can stand the inspection of the public.

The son of Senator Clark has been sued for his wine suppers, and John D. Rockefeller, jr., gave a barber a 5-cent tip. The chips of the old blocks seem to have a hard time cashing in at papa's bank.

King Edward makes it a plan never to sell his horses, and the rest of the Englishmen make it a plan never to bet 'em.

The latest indication of Bertie Adams' whereabouts is the announcement that Portland, Ore., has adopted the whipping post.

The arrival of a rich duke in America doesn't create half the surprise caused by the departure of a rich coachman for England.

King Alfonso's declaration that he will marry to help his country sounds like a Watterson letter, after the colonel had made his old age trip to Paris.

Miss Roosevelt's desire to learn Spanish before going to the Philippines is all wrong. She ought to learn to shoot.

Mr. Jerome wants to disbar a New York lawyer, this being somewhat out of his line of getting people away from the bar without punishment.

The man who says he lost $80,000 on the comic opera, "The Isle of Champagne," can get it all back in a few bottles.

August W. Machen, although described yesterday as looking like a Presbyterian preacher, now has a dislike for tainted money which ought to land him in the Congregationalist fold.

Fire-Trap Structures Are a National Menace

Awful Losses by the Consuming Element Could in Large Part Be Obviated by Proper Building Construction.

By F. W. FITZPATRICK.

Our people are prone to fret under taxation, they rebel when prices of commodities are a trifle above what they think they ought to be and insist upon curative legislation when the cost of railway or other transportation becomes somewhat burdensome.

Yet they blindly submit to a tax that is heavier than any of these, the greatest single tax the nation pays, and one that does absolutely no good to anyone, does not help defray Governmental expenses, does not enrich an individual who again circulates the money back among the people, and yields no profit nor pleasure to anyone; but, tremendous drain that it is, it is entirely wasted, for all that vast outlay of money goes absolutely into—smoke!

Awful Fire Losses.

Not only is our fire loss an awful tax in money, but—think of it—last year it wiped out 6,772 lives. We are appalled at the loss of life occasioned every year by our railroads. Yet, last year but 158 more passengers were killed by those railways than there were people burned to death!

Few people appreciate the life-hazard of fire. There is much legislation anent smallpox, for instance. Our schools insist upon all children being vaccinated, and much ado is made about the disease and the isolation of its victims; yet there are barely half as many people carried off by what is deemed a dread scourge as there are who lose their lives in fires. The death rate by scarlet fever in 1904 did not equal that by fire by several hundreds.

After some great holocaust, such as that at Chicago scarce a year ago, the newspapers and individuals have much to say and urge legislators to most drastic action. And, so, too, after a great sacrifice of property, as at Baltimore, are wise laws and building ordinances much discussed.

Forgotten Lessons.

With the terrible lessons of 1904 in mind, we naturally thought that the nation would awaken to the realization of the fire danger. Indeed, some cities have passed rather severe restrictions that, if insisted upon, would insure a fair standard of building which would go far toward preventing at least great conflagrations.

But there is scarce a city in the country where, if a man have sufficient "influence" with some alderman or other he cannot get "ameliorating concessions" and other exemptions from the building regulations. If he be powerful enough he can build absolutely regardless of building inspector or by-law.

I have records of case after case were "special permits" are issued, or where building inspectors are ordered by their superiors, the council, or the mayor, to issue permits, so and so, or where, if that official refuses, such special permits are issued over his head.

Naturally, as a theater was the scene of the most terrible loss of life, theaters were made the subject of the most rigorous regulations. But the authorities and, above all, the people have grown apathetic, and I doubt if there are ten theaters in the whole country who live up to the full spirit of what a theater should be to insure the protection of the lives of its patrons; in most flagrant violations of the regulations are tolerated.

Fireproof Construction.

We naturally expect that with Baltimore's fate still in mind, most of our cities, at least the intelligent ones, would insist upon larger areas of compulsory fireproof construction and a higher standard established of what is known as fireproof construction. And we expected, above all, that individuals, who, after all, are the principal losers, having received such plain lessons, would exercise greater intelligence in at least building new buildings, if not in protecting and changing the old ones.

But not a bit of it. Wood and more wood is still being used in our buildings, tinderboxes going up all about us, great warehouses that will contain millions of dollars' worth of property, vast institutions where hundreds of human beings are housed, and where often hundreds are locked in, homes by the thousands, all pretty expensively finished, but in which the gravest danger ever lurks.

Who would carry around a quart of nitroglycerin with him in his daily walk of "life and the pursuit of happiness and liberty?" Yet people live and worship and do business and send their children to schools in buildings that, to use an Hibernianism, are as quick on the trigger as nitroglycerin.

Why, within the last few days I have seen three fires where, from the time they were first discovered to the point when floors and roof fell in, including the time it took to carry many human beings in but their nightclothes from out of third and fourth-story windows, scarce half an hour had elapsed.

Folly of Baltimore.

Of all cities one would think that ought to build well now Baltimore should take the lead. Yet it seems to me that there are more tinder-constructed buildings going up there now than there were before the fire, and, all things considered, really inferior construction to that which was swept away scarce twelve months ago.

Our people do not seem, bright as they are in other ways, to have the slightest appreciation of the dangers and the cost of fire. Last year there was actually destroyed over $230,000,000 worth of property, or an average of $630,000 a day, infinitely more money than was expended in new buildings in the same time.

Talk about race suicide! If something is not done to stay this terrible devastation it can only be a question of years when all our cities will have to be rebuilt, not in the natural and proper order of improvement, but prematurely, obligatorily.

This Year's Record.

Are we doing any better this year? The record thus far doesn't show it. As a matter of fact, we have exceeded the average of last year. Take, for instance, the time from February 19 to February 28.

I went to considerable expense and a great deal of trouble to insure my getting the complete record of every fire that occurred during some one period and selected that time to set the requisite machinery in action, not trusting to the ordinary insurance and fire department reports, but making the canvass by special agents and all such means, so as to have ten days' absolute record.

There were 2,275 fires during those ten days, 1,315 of which caused a damage of upwards of $200 each, or an average of 131.5 fires a day. The total loss for the ten days was $14,869,800, or $1,480,980 a day. On one of those days, February 23, there were 165 fires that totaled $2,015,700.

This seems something of retrogression rather than improvement over 1904. True, that period, it so happened, included some pretty heavy single fires, the New Orleans Terminal fire, the Indianapolis fire, the Boston docks and the Hot Springs fires. But just as severe fires are occurring right straight along.

How many days can you pick up your morning's paper and not be confronted with startling headlines of "A great fire at so and so," "Another million gone up in smoke," and "So many lives lost in horrible fire," etc.?

Distribution of Losses.

And this loss is not limited to what merely goes up in smoke. We spend over $50,000,000 a year in the maintenance of fire departments. Some of those departments have become marvels of perfection. Their men are splendidly trained and they have apparatuses which are mechanically perfect. But all this expenditure is an attempt to cure a disease while no steps are being taken, or at least puny, ineffective efforts only are being made, to prevent it.

True, too, people will say that the insurance companies reimburse us—at least, to a degree—for our losses. But, bless you, that's a foolish argument. And besides, there again, for every dollar returned to the individual losers in the way of indemnity by the companies the same companies have had paid into their coffers $3 of premiums.

So that, all things included, direct combustion, money paid for maintenance of fire departments, premiums on insurance absolute loss of rental during at least a short time, there is a complete direct loss to the country of something like $500,000,000 a year caused by fire! Talk of taxes. Is there any other such tax on our people as this?

Twenty-five or more years ago, when we first began to use fireproof construction, erecting steel frames for buildings and encasing them in tile, that form of structure was expensive, though profitable even then. But people got into the notion that fireproof construction was something prohibitive in cost, at least as far as ordinary buildings were concerned.

No Longer Economy.

The use of lumber for floor joists and framing generally was an economy. Lumber was cheap. Those conditions obtain no longer. Timber has gone up 150 per cent. in cost in some places, and the difference between the cost of buildings made the old way and built of tile and steel, the new way, is slight, indeed.

As a matter of fact, considering the permanency of construction, the fewer repairs, and lessened maintenance required, the small amount of insurance it is necessary to carry, not to mention the comfort and satisfaction there is in living in such a building, a thoroughly well-built, fireproof structure—even a small cottage, let alone an important business building—means a lesser total investment and better interest-producing property than does the flimsiest wood-constructed affair you can put up that is mistermed "cheap" in its first cost.

Therein lies the remedy for the ill we deplore. Not wonderful chemical engines, extraordinary water pressure, vast expenditure for additional high-water services, more firemen, and all that sort of thing, but simply better construction, prevention of fire.

It may be a long while before the laws of the land compel people to build well—though it is only a question of time, I know. It may be reasonably doubted that insurance companies will make rates on poor construction prohibitive and, of course, speculators—men who care nothing for the lives or property of others—may always be depended upon to build just as flimsily as they can and still keep out of jail.

But, sensible people, thinking men, men who are building homes for themselves or stores or office buildings, or who direct the disbursement of finances for churches or corporate bodies, should attend to this matter themselves, should take the initiative, should learn that only good building, safe building, is their wisest and best investment.

One reason for the seeming apathy upon the subject is that people do not know any better. The next is that those who should keep them posted fail in their task.

A campaign of education is all that is needed. If the newspapers of the country would set themselves energetically to this task it would be a question of but a little while when popular opinion so directed and educated would place insurmountable obstacles in the ways of speculative shysters and builders of firetraps. All new buildings would be at least moderately fireproof in construction, certainly not of inflammable and combustible material. And there would also be evolved some method of eliminating much of the danger which lies in existing buildings of antiquated construction.

UNFLATTERING TO WOMEN.

Many unflattering sayings about women are current in various countries:

An old English saying: "If a man lose a woman and a farthing, he will be sorry he lost the farthing."

A Scotch one: "The next best thing to no wife is a good wife."

The French adage: "A man of straw is worth a woman of gold."

The German: "There are only two good women in the world—one is dead, and the other can't be found."

The Spanish rhyme has it: "Were a woman as little as she is good, a pea-pod would make her a gown and a hood."

The Arabian says: "Words are women; deeds are men."

The Persian declares: "Women and dragons are best out of the world."

WEAVER IS FIRM ON THE GAS LEASE

Winning Friends Hourly in Political Circles.

MAY ORGANIZE NEW PARTY

Trouble in the Air for City Hall Employes Who Pushed Nefarious Measure Through.

PHILADELPHIA, May 20.—It is now the general belief that Mayor Weaver's action in announcing himself as unalterably and irretrievably opposed to the gas lease is a direct and defiant breaking of the bonds which have heretofore bound him to the Republican organization and a signal to it that he means to be boss.

He is winning friends hourly, and in political circles this morning rumors to the effect that he will organize a new and independent party and act as its leader are rife. Should he take this step immediately after vetoing the ordinance which is designated to take away the city's most valuable asset it is not only possible but probable that he would be successful.

Becomes Central Figure.

As matters now stand, Mayor Weaver is undoubtedly the central figure in the gas lease situation. He is the one man who has the power to halt the deal at this stage, and the people are looking to him to exert that power. He, as well as every one else, knows that veto of the gas ordinance, in itself, will not be sufficient to cause the leaders to change their plans. He must do more than this. He must make the men who are responsible for jamming the bill through councils realize that if they persist in their plans they will have to answer to him.

In order to make his opposition effective he must make the leaders fear him, and the only way in which he can do this is by removing from the public service every man who yields obedience to the organization.

Mayor Means Business.

Gradually it is dawning upon the politicians and upon those municipal employes who place their allegience to the organization before the duty they owe the city that Mayor Weaver means business and that there is trouble in store for every city employe who has in any way made his approval of the present gas deal conspicuous.

If the present state of high feeling continues to grow against the select and common councilmen who voted away the Philadelphia gas works for a period of seventy-five years, the 101 members of both chambers will probably have to form a sort of "mutual admiration society" among themselves for company.

Never before in the history of this city have the citizens held up their councilmen to such scorn. The men who voted for the lease are being shunned by their constituents in clubs, in exchanges, on the street, and, in fact, everywhere. It is a peculiar state of affairs.

HOW OYAMA WORKS.

To the Editor of The Washington Times:

One Western correspondent was quoted recently by one of the Tokyo dailies as saying:

"I wished to see a Japanese lieutenant one day who was stationed at General Oyama's headquarters, established in the midst of a beautiful Chinese garden.

"Stepping to the open door I saw a man, clad in an immaculate white suit, sitting quietly at a table, reading a Japanese newspaper, which completely hid his face. When I spoke he put the newspaper down and then I saw that I was before Oyama himself.

"In the house, and in the garden outside all was as peaceful as if the world had never known of war. You could almost hear the shadows of the moving clouds rustling over the grass.

"Oyama was courteous; he asked me in and offered whisky and soda and a good cigar, for both of which I was duly grateful—I had not had a drink in three days—and waved me to an inner room where Kodama and other officers were sitting.

"The talk was jolly and cheerful, almost flippant. I asked about some detail of the fighting. Kodama laughed. 'You know too much now,' he said, with a smile and a gesture which said, as plainly as world could say: 'Drink your whisky and soda, smoke your cigar and be comfortable. We will attend to the fighting. Your dispatches can wait.'

"And, even while the two generals were joking and laughing with me they were attending to the fighting. At intervals orderlies, sometimes covered with the grime of the battle, would come in, salute, and deliver verbal messages, brief and terse, from some officer in the field. Oyama would suspend his talk, listen, give his directions and then return with animation to the perfectly commonplace topic under discussion, precisely as if nothing special were afoot.

"He received many telephone and telegraph mesages, too, in the same matter-of-fact way, and dictated his replies to his secretary, never losing the fire in his cigar and contentedly sipping his whisky and soda all the while.

"The pretty peaceful Chinese garden in which Oyama's headquarters were hidden away was in the center of a veritable spiderweb of wires through which the commander-in-chief could get instant communication with any part of his forces.

"The Japanese lead the world in field telegraphy. Unlike Western warriors, they string the wires on the ground, and not on posts, thus saving time and money. They have the art of securing insulation worked out to perfection, though they cannot always prevent the Chinese from meddling with the wires.

"One Chinaman cut off a piece of Japanese telephone wire to make a necklace of it, and was beheaded in full sight of dozens of his countrymen, no lighter punishment being thought sufficiently terrifying to teach them the lesson they so plainly needed." F. T.

Washington, D. C., May 17.

WHERE HE FELL DOWN.

Elderly Relative (her first visit)—I am much pleased, Ethel, with the appearance of your husband. He looks like a man who would have no difficulty in carving out a successful career for himself.

Young Wife—You won't say that, auntie, when you see poor dear Harry try his hand on a turkey.—Chicago Tribune.